

APPLICANTS: Farmer  
U.S.S.N.: 09/369,016

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

1-50. (Canceled).

51. (Currently amended). A method of increasing bioavailability of nutrients in a mammal comprising buccally administering to said mammal a composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium, ~~a fructo-oligosaccharide, a mineral gluconate and a supplementary enzyme, wherein said enzyme is selected from the group consisting of a lactase, an amylase, a glucanase, and a catalase.~~

52. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium is a lyophilized vegetative cell.

53. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said bacteria is *Bacillus coagulans* Hammer.

54. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said bacteria is in the form of a spore.

55. (Currently amended). A method of increasing bioavailability of nutrients in a mammal comprising buccally administering to said mammal a composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium, a fructo-oligosaccharide, a mineral citrate and a supplementary enzyme, wherein said enzyme is selected from the group consisting of a lactase, an amylase, a glucanase, and a catalase.

56. (Currently amended). A method of increasing bioavailability of nutrients in a mammal comprising buccally administering to said mammal a composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium, a fructo-oligosaccharide, and a supplementary lactase.

57. (Currently amended). A method of increasing bioavailability of nutrients in a mammal comprising administering to said mammal a suppository, said suppository consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* bacterium and a supplementary lactase.

58. (Previously added). A composition consisting essentially of a *Bacillus coagulans*, a fructo-oligosaccharide, a mineral gluconate and a supplementary lactase.

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59. (Previously added). A composition consisting essentially of a *Bacillus coagulans*, a fructo-oligosaccharide, a mineral citrate and a supplementary lactase

60. (Canceled).

61. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said bacterium is in the form of a dried cell mass.

62. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said composition is in the form of a stabilized gel or paste, or a stabilized liquid suspension.

63. (Previously added). The method of claim 55, wherein said bacterium is in the form of a dried cell mass.

64. (Previously added). The method of claim 55, wherein said composition is in the form of a stabilized gel or paste, or a stabilized liquid suspension.

65. (Canceled).

66. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 57, wherein said composition is in the form of a stabilized gel or paste.

67. (Previously added). The method of claim 51, wherein said composition is a suspension, aerosol spray, capsule, tablet, wafer, powder, or semi-solid formulation.

68. (Previously added). The method of claim 55, wherein said composition is a suspension, aerosol spray, capsule, tablet, wafer, powder, or semi-solid formulation.

69. (Previously added). A composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* and a supplementary lactase.

70. (Previously added). A composition consisting essentially of an isolated *Bacillus coagulans* spore and a supplementary lactase.

71. (Previously added). The composition of claim 69, wherein said composition comprises 200 IU of lactase.